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A "MONASTERY IN THE WORLD": THE CULTURAL MEANING OF A CONCEPT

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Abstract: The center of our attention in the present study is the concept of *monastyr' v miru* "monastery in the world," which became a set expression the late 19th – early 20th century Russian literature and religious philosophy. The emergence of this concept in the discourse of the epoch witnesses to a new manner of demarcation of the spaces of the "church" and the "world," and we shall reveal this intellectual transformation through the contextual analysis of the mentioned set phrase. We apply an interdisciplinary approach, thus the article analyzes not only literary, but also religious material. The concept "monastery in the world" filled a gap in the language and was accountable for describing new reality in social and intellectual life at the boundary between the societal and religious ideas and practices. The first what we see in sources is an ambitious and accusatory rhetoric of expansion of the monastery to the realm of worldly life, that in the second half of the 19th century has lost its Christian groundings. However, the opposite type of rhetoric — that of defense of the symbolic monastery walls from the evil worldly expansion — comes soon. This strategy became especially current during the revolutionary turbulence, when clergy and laity envisage the "world" as a power destroying the walls of the symbolic monastery — Christian communities, souls of Christians or their religious way of life.

Keywords: monastery in the world, Russian Orthodoxy, rhetoric strategies, intellectual history, Fyodor Dostoevsky, literature of the Silver Age, Russian revolution.

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«МОНАСТЫРЬ В МИРУ»: КУЛЬТУРНОЕ ЗНАЧЕНИЕ КОНЦЕПТА

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Исследование осуществлено в 2023 г. в рамках проекта «Церковные сообщества в позднем СССР: церковная жизнь и государственная идеология» при поддержке ПСТГУ и Фонда «Живая традиция»

Аннотация: В данном исследовании мы рассматриваем концепт «монастырь в миру», ставший устойчивым выражением в русской литературе и религиозной философии конца XIX – начала XX в. Появление этого выражения в языке эпохи свидетельствует о новом способе демаркации пространств «церкви» и «мира». Мы выявляем эту интеллектуальную трансформацию через контекстуальный анализ упомянутого выражения, применяя междисциплинарный подход: в статье анализируется материал как художественной, так и религиозной литературы. Концепт «монастырь в миру» заполнил пробел в языке и был призван описать новую реальность в социальной и интеллектуальной жизни на границе между общественными и религиозными идеями и практиками. Первое, что мы видим в источниках, — далеко заходящая обличительная риторика экспансии монастыря в сферу мирской жизни, которая во второй половине XIX в. утратила свои христианские основания. Однако вскоре появляется и противоположный тип риторики — риторика защиты символических монастырских стен от мирской экспансии. Эта риторическая стратегия стала особенно актуальной в период революции, когда духовенство и миряне представляли «мир» как силу, разрушающую стены символического монастыря — христианские общины, души христиан или их религиозный образ жизни.

Ключевые слова: монастырь в миру, русское православие, риторические стратегии, интеллектуальная история, Федор Достоевский, литература Серебряного века, русская революция.

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The late 19th – early 20th centuries were characterized by monastic practices escaping beyond monastery walls, a process, which Patrick L. Michelson called "ascetic revolution" [17] and Sergey Khoruzhii alternatively described as the phenomenon of "hesychastic socialization" [14]. The width of these processes, within which the specific significance of the concept "monastery in the world" for Russian culture emerges, forces us to apply precisely an interdisciplinary approach and analyze both literary and religious sources. Hence the pilgrimages of Russian writers and philosophers to the monastery become characteristic of the era; these trips take on a cultural significance [4]. Historiography (which, as this article will show, goes back to the debates in religious philosophy of the early 20th century) depicts Nikolai Gogol's relations with the monks of the Optina Pustyn as a sharp and irreconcilable conflict between the realms of secular activity and monastic life (which in itself is questioned as a fact of the writer's life) [2]. Another popular example is the question of the place of "Optina Christianity" in the life and work of Leo Tolstoy [10]. The theme of monastery, as researchers note, is important in the work of Nikolai Leskov, who described the secularization of monastic life not only in his fiction but also in his journalistic texts [6, p. 471]. The intense debate around these issues testifies to the importance of the problem of the relationship between the monastery and the world.

In its turn the perceptions of the world become subject to reinterpretation in the epistolary legacy of the Optina eldership, to which Russian writers and philosophers turned at this time. The opposition between the "world" and the "monastery" is especially often encountered in the epistolary legacy of the Optina Elders, beginning with Macarius of Optina (1788–1860). This is typified by a series of letters from the 1850s mentioning a certain girl who, by all appearances,

was conflicted about whether to leave the world: "N… had a temptation to turn away from the monastery, seemingly because she had spent time in the world, being diverted by the charms and false pleasures of the world, and there was no one to whom she could reveal this or who could strengthen her" [49, part 1, p. 185]. Being in the world is opposed to "living in the monastery," but not to monasticism itself as a status and institution. The center of attention is the distance between two modes of existence. The epistolary genre makes it possible to focus on the moments that are most dangerous of all from the point of view of the Elder: moments when the young nun (or novice) interacts with her relatives, former friends, and everything that had previously been the natural milieu in which she had lived, but is now lumped together under the common term of the "world" and contrasted with the space and her way of life in the monastery: "You see now how perilous and dangerous it is for you to withdraw from the monastery and enter into the sea of the world…" [49, part 1, p. 491].

For Macarius of Optina, the concept of the "world" begins to grow closer to that of "society" and the "public sphere," in other words with the same meaning that the concept of "society" would acquire in the latter half of the 19th century [7, p. 434]: "We read Pogodin's article 'Doroga Troitskaia' in the *Russkaia Gazeta*. What bilious venom has been written against the monks of the Lavra and in general, with lessons being given about building the road and about the clergy. It is bitter to hear how the world mocks the spiritual estate, and woe to us who are meant to be the light of the world, and now the world wishes to enlighten us with its dark and gloomy things — not light, but darkness" [49, part 1, p. 432].

Thus "fleeing the world" (that is the company of relatives, friends, and acquaintances) turns into fleeing from "society," from people "led on by their passions" [49, part 3, p. 54]. In this way, the key opposition "the world ['society'] vs. the monastery" implies a shift of the focus away from institutional allegiance toward engagement in a particular kind of ascetic practices. It is in this sense that we can understand the following words of Bishop Ignatius (Brianchaninov), spoken in 1861: "In 1829, while Elder Theophan was still alive, I came to Novoezersk, after living in Optina and Ploshchansk: the monks of Novoezersk seemed to me as laymen…" [36, vol. 7, p. 539]. Monks can thus also be laypeople — and this is not an oxymoron if one considers that laypeople are not just members of local communities or non-monks, but rather people whose way of life is typical of "society." If there can be laypeople amidst monks, then, by extension, there can also

be monks among laypeople: those who, while living in the word without taking vows, embody the ascetic ideals of monasticism.

This transformation reflected a new horizon of expectations with respect to the concept of the "monastery" in a new historical and cultural situation, in which conditions were created for a new set phrase to enter into the language: *monastyr' v miru* 'monastery in the world.'

The Rhetoric of the Monastery Entering the World

One of the results of the "ascetic revolution" was the idea of "expanding" the monastery into the world, in other words, the idea of saving and transforming the world by revealing the thought of the Church to it. Perhaps the first to voice this problem in modern Russia was Alexander Bukharev (1822–1871), claiming that we "ought to stand for all facets of humanity as belonging to Christ" [27, p. 20]. On the one hand, Bukharev was inspired by the ideas of Russian writers and continued their tradition (see "Three letters to Gogol, written in 1848") [13]. On the other hand, his ideas have influenced the further development of this issue, both in literature and in religious philosophy. His ideas became widely known only many years after his death [19], due to the growing attention to the scandalous story of Bukharev's abandonment of monasticism [12]. Bukharev's leaving the monastic rank is reflected, for example, in Leskov's story "The Stoppage of the Growing Tongue" [6, p. 430] (by the way, we should remember that Leskov's hero, who has left the monastery, leads a righteous life in the world [5, p. 204]). It has even suggested that Bukharev was the prototype for Alyosha Karamazov [9]. With this perspective, it seems important to make note of Sergei Fudel's thesis that the idea of the expansion of the monastery into the world was a product of Dostoevsky's creative genius [53, vol. 3, p. 82; 53, vol. 1, p. 197; 8].

While still working on the novel *Demons* (1870–1872), Dostoevsky did exhibit an interest in this idea [30, vol. 11, p. 29], yet we see it used actively in the novel *The Brothers Karamazov* (completed in 1880). In terms of the plot, it is connected with Elder Zosima's saying: in his dying moments, the Elder commands his disciple, Alexei (Alyosha) Karamazov, to leave the monastery and return to the world: "I give you my blessing for a great obedience in the world" [30, vol. 14, p. 71]. Elder Zosima leaves the substance of Alyosha's mission a secret, and we are therefore left guessing what is actually meant by this "obedience in the world." As has been noted by scholars, Dostoevsky was probably speaking about the idea of

serving one's neighbor in the world rather than about translating ascetic practices into the life of laymen [3]. Another place where Zosima speaks about "monasticism in the world" supports this interpretation: "I think about you thus: you shall leave these walls, and shall abide in the world as a monk. ...Life will bear many ill fortunes for you, but for them you will be happy and will bless life, and will make others to do so: which is most important of all" [30, vol. 14, p. 259].

Although this quotation does not quite make clear what monks "in the world" are called in the novel, it is nonetheless evident that Dostoevsky distinguishes between two spheres: the world and the monastery. All the while, the sphere of public life is a space in which Alyosha, as representing the "monastery," is supposed to adopt a position of active involvement.

When speaking about Dostoevsky's influence on the idea of removing the demarcation of the monastery and the world, it seems possible to us to distinguish two currents in which the idea of "monasticism in the world" was further developed.

We find Dostoevsky's idea being considered from a pastoral point of view in the works of Metropolitan Antony (Khrapovitskii, 1863–1936), who re-actualized the idea of "learned monasticism" with reference to Dostoevsky's works and attempted to make reality the idea of a monastic community ('new union of monks' [25]) called to shape the world: "Elder Zosima and monasticism are precisely the organizing force, albeit one devoid of any guarantees from outside, whereby the Church predominately extends Her regenerating influence onto life. It is indeed noteworthy that Dostoevsky opposes the organization of the Great Inquisitor... a humble monastic community near a provincial town" [20, p. 345].

Dostoevsky's project of "monastic" expansion into the world met with criticism on the part of his contemporaries. First of all, there was Antony Khrapovitskii's younger friend Bishop Mikhail (Gribanovskii, 1856–1898)[1], who overtly criticized this idea. In his 1886 speech "What is the Essence of the Church Mentality?", Bishop Mikhail pointed out that the focal point of public life should be the parish gathered around the priest, an ideal that could be perceived in the "original Christian community" [40, p. 489]. Yet unlike Metropolitan Antony, he saw the salvation of the Church to be not monastics, but parish priests, who were supposed to uphold the principle of ecclesiasticism in the world. Secondly, we find

1 It is pointed out that he was the prototype of Chekhov's *The Bishop* [40, p. XXXV].

a type of implicit criticism in Vasiliy Eksempliarskii's (1874–1933) talk "Eldership" (1917). He does not speak overtly about Metropolitan Antony's ideas, but is clearly responding to his rhetoric of "monastic" expansion into the world: "The notion of the 'elder' has already left the enclosure of the monastery: secular people have also begun to speak about 'elders', and not only monks and spiritual fathers from amidst the white clergy, but also secular persons, have begun to be venerated as 'elders'" [54, p. 155].

The fact that the ascetic concept of the "elder" extended beyond monastery walls can be illustrated by how the figure of Mikhail Novoselov was perceived. Novoselov was a former Tolstoyite who had been involved in religious outreach ever since his conversion. In Moscow circles, he was called "Abba" or an "elder in the world"[2]. All the while, Eksempliarskii himself campaigned against not the "authority of elders" *per se*, but against the distortion of this authority in the world: "I think such 'elders in the world' are all, without exception, opportunists who endanger the Church and who may, of course, exploit the darkness of the people and the overtaxed nerves of the intelligentsia, yet... most definitely deserve to be condemned by the Church" [54, p. 194]. This criticism testifies in the first instance to the fact that contemporaries certainly did pick up on the rhetoric of expansion underlying the concept of "monasticism in the world".

As a matter of fact, this same "world," understood as "society," reacted ambiguously to the rhetoric of the Church. One of the most typical events in early 20th century Russia were the "Religious-Philosophical Gatherings" (1901–1903), at which the religious intelligentsia and the Church hierarchy were supposed to meet and defuse the conflicts between the Church and society. One of the key topics at the Gatherings was the problem of the Church's relation to the creative process, which must be explored at least in part here.

First, it must be mentioned that the very formulation of this problem shows that, for the religious intelligentsia, the concept of the "world" was becoming a denotation not of sin itself, but of various fields of human activity, for example, secular literature. Taking this concept of the "world" as his starting point, Dmitry Merezhkovskii (1865–1941) notes: "In his anathema against Gogol and Pushkin, Fr. Matfei proclaimed an anathema against all Russian literature, all 'en-

2 This was, by all appearances, initially an epithet used of Novoselov by those around him. For instance, Sergei Bulgakov writes about Novoselov in one of his letters: "Abba... is well and abba-esque as ever" [28, p. 501]. Yet later this metaphor became widespread: [31, p. 210–211; 42, p. 196].

lightenment,' 'light,' and the 'world,' against all flesh, all creatures who were not yet redeemed, but 'groaning together for redemption'." [34, p. 179] Secondly, the "expansion" of the Church into the world, which, if one follows Merezhkovskii, one can see in the situation with Gogol's spiritual father Matfei, was perceived as the Church intervening in the self-sufficient affairs of the world. The dichotomy of sanctification/condemnation therefore runs through the Church's (lack of) recognition of culture.

With this perspective, Vasiliy Rozanov's (1856–1919) talk "On the Sweetest Jesus and the Sour Fruits of the World," given at the Religious-Philosophical Society (herein: RPhS) in 1907, is important. Reflecting on Merezhkovskii's words about Gogol's fate, he formulates his famous thesis that "Gogol does not enter the Gospel as an inlay"; the Gospel itself is "inlayed into the world," but "does not open itself up for the world, does not accept it into itself" [44, vol. 1, p. 147]. Therefore, the Church, having tasted Christ, dies to the world (primarily through the asceticism criticized by Rozanov), and is "compelled to consider the whole world, our life, birth itself (not to mention the sciences and the arts), as demonic, 'lying in evil'" [44, vol. 1, p. 151].

Yet there were not only critics, but also apologists for ascetic rejection of the world at the RPhS. For instance, Valentin Sventsitskii (1881–1931) gave a talk entitled "The Worldwide Significance of Ascetic Christianity" (1908), in which he contrasted the "worldly church," which had entered into an alliance with the world, and the ascetics, who forsook compromise and preserved "the connection between the principle of the Divine and the world" as given by Christ [44, vol. 1, p. 271]. He establishes the historical significance of asceticism in terms of its place in history, which he sees as a process of differentiation of good and evil in the world [44, vol. 1, p. 277]. This defines the task of the new era, which is to "bring into the world everything that has been revealed through individual contemplation, and thereby transform the world through the live-creating religious force that had previously transformed only individual souls in caves below the earth" [44, vol. 1, p. 278].

In some sense, Sventsitskii absolutizes the idea of the expansion of the "Church" into the world as a cosmological process, while distinguishing between "Christian society" and the "official Church," which, in his opinion, would come to persecute true Christianity [44, vol. 1, p. 280]. This is evidently the reason why, upon visiting Tolstoy's grave in 1910, Sventsitskii said that Tolstoy himself had

arrived at the same point to which the ascetic labors of monastery elders lead, and that for this reason "what he carried with him in his soul, that *monastery* which is invisible to other people, is now raised up above his grave amidst the quiet winter forest" [47, p. 562]. This rhetorical strategy became widespread when describing the lives of Russian writers, whose literary activities seem to have come to be perceived as ascetic practices. Some time later, in 1913, Sergei Durylin (1886–1954), another publicist and literary critic, would use this concept when writing how Nikolai Leskov was "building a monastery in his soul" [32, p. 342]. Thus the development of the concept of the monastery in the world was influenced not only by Dostoevsky, but in its own way also by Leskov and Tolstoy.

This theme would be further developed by Nikolay Berdiaev (1874–1948) with reference to a particular conception of asceticism that entailed using the concept of the "monastery in the world." In his work "The Meaning of Creativity" (1916), he likewise criticized "historical Christianity" for adapting to the world it is supposed to "overcome" [23, p. 157]. From his point of view, this issue can be solved only by asceticism or creativity, which in many respects serve the same task of transforming the world [15, p. 110–139]. Berdiaev, of course, meant not the ascetic practices of humility, obedience, and repentance: these he opposes with a "positive" asceticism of daring and activity [23, p. 159–161]. In this text, he does not formulate the concept we are investigating; it comes somewhat later, in "The New Middle Ages," published by Berdiaev in Berlin in 1924. There, he writes about "monasticism in the world" becoming a typical feature of future society [22, p. 436]. He connects this idea with his project of reconsidering the place of creative activity in the church as a force for transforming the world [24, p. 43].

In this way, even though the idea of expanding the "monastery" into the world is attested, among the religious intelligentsia this rhetoric was not associated with the "historical" church. The phenomenon of the RPhS even more clearly designated the various vectors that they followed, and the tragic events in political history that followed the Society's meetings showed that the world was not prepared for, and did not desire, an "expansion" of the Church. It is evident that in the very development of this one concept, the two discourses of the Church and the religious intelligentsia drifted apart.

When this atomization of society occurred, another, different current emerged out of Dostoevsky's ideas as described at the outset. The idea of the monastery expanding into the world was subjected to a radical re-thinking, ac-

cording to which Alyosha Karamazov's journey was to be that of a revolutionary. For instance, Aleksei Suvorin, to whom Dostoevsky revealed his intentions for a continuation of *The Brothers Karamazov*, wrote: "[Dostoevsky] said that he would write a novel with Alyosha Karamazov as the protagonist. He wanted to have him pass through the monastery and to make him a revolutionary. He would commit a political crime" [51, p. 16]. Whether or not this was so, the kind of activity that could be described through the metaphor of leaving the monastery for the world comes to be associated with the political realm. This appears to be the reason why the phrase "monastery in the world" is found in the early 20th c. account of the life of the radical revolutionary Sophia Perovskaya[3]. Somewhat later, we find Merezhkovskii, who had become disappointed in the "official church," expressing the same idea. He ascertained the religious roots of Populism and denoted them "monastery in the world" with the metaphor [38, p. 221; 16].

Rhetoric of the Defense of the Monastery in the World

Along with the idea of expanding Christianity in the secular world, the concept of the "monastery in the world" became a rallying cry for those who proposed a move in the exact opposite direction. As early as the 1860s, Theophan the Recluse wrote to a correspondent of his about a "monastery in the heart"[4]. This concept looks like a pastoral tactic in reaction to the world becoming a "society" in which Christians can live more or less comfortably (remember how Macarius of Optina wrote about this). However, the flourishing of the "defensive" interpretation of the "monastery in the world" came in the post-Revolutionary era, when clergymen presented this idea as a pastoral scenario, that is, as an attempt to protect themselves and their flock from the world. After 1917, priests spoke more and more rarely about saving the world, and more and more often about saving oneself *from* the world in the enclosures of the communities formed by them [18, p. 179–186].

This shift is most vividly noticeable in the case of Valentin Sventsitskii, who was ordained in 1917. While he had previously spoken about translating as-

3 Perovskaya's life is described in such hagiographical tones by P. Kropotkin [37, p. 299–300], while V. Bogucharskii found an apt turn of phrase for this description: "a bona fide ascetic, rigorist, and nun in the world, who is entirely about serving others" [26, p. 153].

4 Cf.: "When you have a monastery in your heart, then what does it matter whether you have the structure of monastery life. Having a monastery in your heart means: God and the soul" [52, p. 14].

cetic practices into the world, in the Soviet period, ascetic practices became a kind of inner desert that enabled one to flee from the world. Sventsitskii's 1924 treatise "Mystical Doctrine" develops this idea further. He terms "non-ascetic Christianity" to be a false substitute for true Christianity, since Christianity must be constructed on the basis of asceticism [46, p. 52]. In this text, Sventsitskii described hesychastic practices as a kind of litmus test for this opposition, while describing prayer itself as the building of an "secret monastery": "A person lays one stone upon another as he utters the words of [the Jesus] prayer, and day after day, year after year, invisible walls sprout up around his soul, separating him from worldly life… He is a secret monk of a secret monastery, who has never received tonsure and lives, as far as those around him are concerned, in the world yet has, for himself, retreated into his own monastery of noetic prayer" [46, p. 96]. As can be seen, here it is not just a matter of "Christian society" and of transforming the world, but about walling off the faithful inside an "invisible monastery" that is built up not only through an outward retreat from the world (recall Sventsitskii's deliberations on Tolstoy), but also through inner ascetic practices.

In many respects, Sventsitskii kept to his previous views on history, but by the late 1920s, progress in his view of the world was aimed not only at differentiating the world and the church, but also the "true Church from the counterfeit" [45, p. 329]. The true Church is differentiated from the untrue Church in that She is "not of this world" [45, p. 323]. The principles making up "worldly" things are power, inequality and selfishness. A person who bears these principles in himself overcomes them in the body of the Church, in which they cannot exist. In the Church, "everything is built upon spiritual and moral authority, equality and sacrificial love" [45, p. 339]. From this, Sventsitskii draws two conclusions: first, any historical sin on the part of the Church is due to worldly principles infiltrating the Church. For instance, this is how he explains his move away from criticism of "historical Christianity" toward ministry in holy orders. Secondly, while early monasticism preserved true Christianity, there has to emerge a new form of salvation from the "spirit of secularization" in Soviet times[5]. The "monastery in the world" had to occupy a key place in this historical process, and became the main substance of his sermons.

5 Cf.: "The monastery has fallen into decline and, one could even say, into destruction… The outward form of monastery life known to us may ultimately be destroyed by an outward historical system, but *monasticism* as such will never be destroyed" [45, p. 279–280].

For Sventsitskii, the prototype of the "monastery in the world" was the proto-Christian community of Jerusalem: "[The community of the very first Christians] was nothing other than a monastery in the world, and the first Christians monks within this monastery" [45, p. 265]. From his point of view, in the community described in the Acts of the Apostles, everybody lived according to the moral demands that later became specifically monastic after the boundaries between the Church and the world were erased. In essence, in describing the era before institutional monasticism, through terms of which the significance of monasticism is reconsidered, he turns the scale on its head and asserts that a "monastery in the world" is more similar to the proto-Christian community than to an ordinary monastery. Monasteries had preserved the ideals of Apostolic Christianity only until the historical denouement of the Post-revolutionary period: the revival of monasteries outside of monastery walls. "The invisible walls," he wrote, "which are stronger than stone walls, will shield the Holy Church from the world that lies in evil" [45, p. 283]. These deliberations show that Sventsitskii regarded the emergence of monasteries in the world as a stage in which "outward" monasticism would be displaced and there would be a return to the ideal of the early Christian community [46, p. 402]. But what is more important is that he equates the "monastery in the world" modeled on the first Christian community with his own community, which by this time had already been formed out of his spiritual children[6].

In the early 1920s, the expression "worldly monastery" was used by Priest Sergius Mechev (1892–1942), the rector of a Moscow church, to describe his father's community, which he had "inherited" from him: "Father had a special position. His mission, he would often say with a smile, was to 'construct a worldly monastery'." [39, p. 321] This idea implied that it was possible not only for monks, but also for those outside of monastery walls, to perform particular spiritual feats: "[Fr. Alexis Mechev] placed us in conditions conducive to spiritual growth, and revealed to us that which had been closed off to us by monastery walls" [39, p. 323].

A priesthood that wishes to meet these requirements, should be guided by the ideal of monastic eldership. This is evidenced by a mysterious text of which Fr. Alexis Mechev left a copy on his desk before his death. This text has gone down in history as the "Eulogy, Left by Fr. Alexis before his Death" (1923)[7].

6 On this, see Archpr. Valentine's private letters to his community from exile [45, p. 470–471].

7 On him, see Pavel Florensky's deliberations: [41, p. 583–603].

We know that the eulogy was borrowed by Alexis himself from the eulogy for Ambrose of Optina by Archpriest Grigorii (Borisoglebskii), a disciple of Antony (Khrapovitskii): “Come at last to the grave of this great shepherd, pastor of the Church of Russia, and learn from him to *shepherd in the world*” [41, p. 591–592; 29, p. 53–55]. In the view of contemporaries, the image of the shepherd in the “worldly monastery” matched that of the author himself, because at that time he was called the “parish elder” [35, p. 62][8].

In 1924, Priest Anatolii Zurakovskii (1897–1937), writing from exile in Yoshkar-Ola, spoke of a “white monastery”[9]. Although Zurakovskii did not describe the meaning of this idea in detail, it is clear that what was behind these words was not only the ideal of a chaste marriage (which, as we know, he himself embodied [43, p. 416]), but also an attempt to frame the life of the church community within the new social situation. A message of his to his congregation, written the year before, speaks to this: “For Christ, persecuted in the squares of a world hostile to Him, we want to create a place where He is not just an occasional Guest, but where everything belongs to Him always and undividedly… Our community… must become a special world [*osobyi mirok*] that embraces, gathers under one dome the life of each of us in all its fullness of expression” [33, p. 339]. Father Anatolii, as we can see, emphasizes withdrawing from a world hostile to the Church through the ‘churching’ of all of life. The place where people leave society (which through the Soviet reality was fundamentally opposed to the Church) ought to be the church community, in which alone true unity is possible.

The examples we have found allow us to say that, in the early decades after the Revolution, the concept of the monastery in the world was predominantly linked to demarcating the community from the world around it[10]. The historical and semantic development of the opposition between the world and the monastery eventually led to the separation of the “institutional” and the “authentic” in the interpretation of the concept of the monastery: the monastery itself becomes a metaphor for a community of pious Christians united around a pastor.

8 Cf. also: “Fr. Alexis was an urban elder who benefited people no less than any desert-dweller. …Fr. Alexis was the same as the Optina Elders, only that he lived in Moscow, and this was a most great comfort for many Muscovites who were in serious search of spiritual care” [21, p. 25–26).

9 *Archive of A. D. Artobolevskaia* (private collection, Moscow) (Quoted from: [43, p. 417]).

10 Cf. also the alternative approach, which emphasizes typological characteristics rather than concepts [1].

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In the 1960s and 1970s, Sergei Fudel combined the horizons of meaning behind the concept of the monastery in the world[11], no longer distinguishing between the rhetoric of "expansion" and "defense." The mission of Alyosha Karamazov, the church community, and the Christian's inner state all fit the description of this concept: "The monastery in the world is the struggle against one's own secularization. The monastery in the world means remembering the Unsleeping Eye while descending into the tunnels of the Metro. It is the forest of Sarov growing in the wilderness of the soul, even while man is surrounded by all the noise of history" [42, vol. 2, p. 182]. To illustrate how widespread the idea of the "monastery in the world" had become, we can mention other cases from this period. In the mid-1950s, Athanasius (Sakharov, 1887–1962) writes about how the idea of the "monastery in the world" had become "especially dear" to him, and about how he considered "propagating it to be of the utmost necessity" [50, p. 431, 523]. We can also see the idea of the "monastery in the world" being developed in a consistent way by Sergii (Savel'ev, 1899–1977), who cites a letter from 1932 in 1970s: "Live in your hearts as if you were living not in the world, but in a monastery. Only your monastery is not behind stone walls, but one spread out across all the face of the earth" [48, p. 165]. This text quotes a famous phrase of Gogol, who wrote: "Your monastery is Russia! Mentally clothe yourself in the black chasuble and... go forward to work within her" [48, p. 165–166][12]. This phrase logically closes our article, in which we have only posed the problem, but not solved it exhaustively[13]. One could say that the concept in Soviet times loses its "programmatic" meaning, becoming instead a universal "code" for describing church life in the period following oppression when community ties were disintegrating.

Conclusion

The issue of the monastery was of concern to many Russian writers and above all to Fyodor Dostoevsky. This is why Dostoevsky's legacy was also referred to in search for solutions to the problems of church life. One of the concepts Dos-

11 See especially the appendix "On Life in the World" to the Text "Way of the Fathers" [53, vol. 2, p. 177–188].

12 Savel'ev does not quote accurately; the translation is from [55, p. 114].

13 Cf. also the works "White Monasticism" by Ioann Shakhovskii, "Spiritual Life in the World" by Sergii (Korolev), etc. There is as yet no research that encompasses the whole spectrum of these issues (cf. [11]).

toevsky introduced in his novels was that of the monastery in the world. This concept has both its origins and a further history, in which the "monastery in the world" took on a life of its own, or better said, has passed from the novel into real life. The concept of the monastery in the world has implications beyond literary analysis, and can be examined from a broader cultural perspective that includes religious philosophy and theology.

It is only seldom the case that concepts are noticed behind words and treated as semantic units that can reflect social and intellectual processes through their emergence and transformation. One of these processes is the gradual emergence of a specific vision of the Church and society as two opposing phenomena. The linguistic tools with which this opposition came to be described began to take shape long before the upheavals of the Revolution; one of the most representative of these tools was the concept of the "monastery in the world." However, the relationship between the "world" and the "monastery," viewed within this concept, was dynamic. First, an ambitious rhetoric of expansion emerged, characteristic of the late 19th century, only to be replaced by a defensive rhetoric of symbolic "monastery walls." The latter tendency became a common pastoral strategy in the Revolutionary era, when the "world" changed from a passively hostile to an actively offensive force prepared literally to destroy the Church.

Irrespectively of the internal relationships between the components of the "monastery in the world" concept, its very appearance is a significant landmark in Russian religious history. The formation of the opposition between the "world" and the "monastery" as it developed by the late 19th century (that is, before the two terms were eventually combined under the concept of the "monastery in the world") is the moment when two key categories of modern social rhetoric, church and society, were recognized as being separate.

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